DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 428 073 SP 038 359

AUTHOR Silva, Diane Yendol
TITLE Cultivating an Inquiry Oriented Professional Development School: The Mentor Teachers' Experience at Mountainside Elementary School.
PUB DATE 1999-02-00
NOTE 48p.; Paper presented at the Association of Teacher Educators (Chicago, IL, February 12-16, 1999).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College School Cooperation; Elementary Education; Elementary School Teachers; Higher Education; *Mentors; *Partnerships in Education; Preservice Teacher Education; *Professional Development Schools; Student Teachers; Student Teaching; Teacher Collaboration; Teacher Researchers; *Teacher Role

ABSTRACT

This study examined the work of six mentor teachers participating in an elementary-level Professional Development School (PDS). Over 18 months, the researcher collected qualitative data using a descriptive case study method. Data collection included journal entries written by mentors and interns, field notes, interviews, e-mail, meeting minutes, and transcripts from PDS meetings. The unit of analysis was the mentor teacher who worked within the newly formed PDS. Each teacher participated in two or three semi-structured interviews focusing on biographical information, experiences as a mentor in the PDS, and problems and possibilities for the PDS. Data analysis investigated three overlapping phases of teacher work toward a PDS (conceptualization, teacher as teacher educator, and teacher as researcher). Results suggest that in the conceptualization phase, teachers were not committed to the renewal piece of the vision, were not always comfortable using their voices, and valued and protected their comfortable ways of doing business. In the teacher as teacher educator phase, teachers' work changed in meaningful ways as they incorporated interns into the classroom. Teachers grew professionally as they dialogued with interns and assumed the role of teacher educator. In the final phase, researchers are still trying to determine how inquiry will be appraised by teachers and whether inquiry will eventually become part of what they do as teachers and teacher educators. (Contains 25 references.) (SM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

SP

ED 428 073

Cultivating an inquiry oriented Professional Development School: The mentor teachers' experience at Mountainside Elementary School

Diane Yendol Silva
The Pennsylvania State University

Graduate Student Roundtable Presentation
ATE, 1999
Chicago, Illinois

SP033359

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

D. Y. Silva

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Current Rhetoric or Everyday Reality?

An incredibly wise mentor[1] and friend recently asked me, "What are you learning about the work of mentor teachers as you participate in and study this newly formed Professional Development School?" This simple question seemed to stop me dead in my tracks. The thought of putting into words or committing to paper the many feelings I had about teachers' work in this Professional Development School seemed to cloud my thinking and frankly scared me to death. My interest in educational co-reform and my research agenda had begun to blur. I couldn't see past the current rhetoric of reform to acknowledge the everyday reality of teachers working with children in this Professional Development School.

I had spent over a year working with these teachers to create a Professional Development School and the process, although exhilarating and challenging, had taken on dimensions to the PDS story that I had certainly never anticipated. Additionally, and much to my frustration, the work was not what I had hoped it would be. In my friend's wisdom and in response to my frustration, he states quite matter of factly:

> It sounds as if you are disappointed by multiple agendas at the school... and by teachers' reluctance to look deeply into their own practices ... am I close? It also sounds as if you feel a "community of inquiry" is no closer than when you started.

He was right. In a sense, I was hoping to tell a story that was a part of the rhetoric of the current reform movement but not yet a part of the reality of these teachers' work.

I remember early in my doctoral work my advisor suggesting that I be patient because a story would emerge from this work that I would feel compelled to tell. However, what I did not understand until this point is that the story I decide to tell is only

one version of the many possible stories that could be told. Now, I had a new problem. Which story would I tell? There is a story about change, a story about collaboration, a story about trust, a story about leadership, a story about power, a story about teachers, and a story about children to name only a few. Deciding which story to tell requires me to sit back and refocus on my friend's question. What am I learning about teachers in this Professional Development School?

After reflecting on my own personal journal, maintained throughout the year, and brushing away my frustrations with the work, the bottom line and most critical story is that teachers make the difference. Although all participants in this partnership must work collaboratively, the people who will determine the success of this educational reform effort are the teachers. Without them, there will be no reflection, there will be no growth, there will be no change, and the PDS will be in name only, consistent with much of the literature (Dana, Personal Communication). This is something I knew from the start but had somehow forgotten. I am a teacher. I know from personal practical knowledge based on 13 years of classroom experience that change happens only when it is consistent with teachers' beliefs. But I had somehow forgotten the importance of this simple fact as I became immersed in the challenges of the work, the rhetoric of educational reform, the politics of organizations at work, and my own personal vision of what it means to engage in powerful professional practice.

So, I find myself back to the initial question, what do I know about the work of mentor teachers in this Professional Development School? To address this question, I begin with the PDS literature in an effort to highlight how the goals of PDSs may differ

---

[1] I'd like to thank Lee Goldsberry for his patience, insight, and willingness to refocus this graduate student on the important issues.

from public schools that support traditional field based teacher education programs. The literature suggests that Professional Development Schools, focused on developing an inquiry oriented culture, offer promise to teachers interested in meaningful participation in the issues and practice of educational reform. According to Darling-Hammond (1994), creating infinitely skilled teachers may be the key to successful educational reform. Infinitely skilled teachers participate in inquiry by observing their own students, questioning their current practices, posing engaging questions, recognizing challenges, monitoring progress, and adjusting practices to meet the needs of their students (Darling-Hammond,1998). Yet, even in light of the abundance of educational reform efforts, these characteristics have not flourished in the traditional culture of schooling (Fullan, 1991; Hargreaves, 1994; Lortie, 1975).

In an effort to build a new culture of professional learning within schools that will better meet the unique needs of today's students, many educators have advocated the creation of Professional Development Schools (Darling-Hammond, 1994, Levine, 1997). In fact, almost every commission and report on teacher education (Goodlad, 1990; Holmes, 1986; Holmes, 1990; Levine, 1992) advocates the Professional Development School as a strong vehicle for educational change. Darling-Hammond (1998) describes Professional Development Schools as spaces where prospective and mentor teacher learning becomes 1) experiential, 2) grounded in teacher questions, 3) collaborative, 4) connected to and derived from teachers' work with their students, and 5) sustained, intensive, and connected to other aspects of school change. The Professional Development School is a place where problems of schooling are posed and solved by teachers. This teacher-centered notion of professional development driven by the unique

needs of public school children is supported by the philosophy of Professional Development Schools, and supplants the traditional recipes and prescriptions of staff development. The culture of a Professional Development School can create the spaces for "infinitely skilled teachers" who, according to Darling-Hammond (1998):

> Learn best by studying, doing, and reflecting; by collaborating with other teachers; by looking closely at students and their work; and by sharing what they see (p.8).

However, in reviewing the literature on mentors working in PDSs, we have little insight into the work experiences and roles of mentor teachers and the often subtle changes that impacts their work.

The lack of attention in the literature regarding the work and roles of mentor teachers in Professional Development Schools inspired this study. After reviewing the literature, I recognized that little was understood about the work roles and experiences of mentor teachers in Professional Development Schools and that an account of their work could well augment our understanding. This study is designed to uncover and portray the experiences, growth, and development of mentor teachers who work with undergraduate interns as one aspect of the Professional Development School process. In addition to committing to work with student interns, these mentor teachers in this Professional Development School have taken on an additional role that asks them to engage in critical inquiry concerning their work, either inside or outside the classroom.

In answering this question, I focus on the work of six mentor teachers to paint a portrait of their work for others to see. I do not believe that these cases are necessarily representative of all mentor teachers' work in all newly formed Professional Development Schools. However, I do believe that they offer insight into the work

teachers do as they collaborate in PDS settings with interns and university faculty with the goal of enhancing education for children.

Background of Study

The Mountainside Elementary School in conjunction with a Research One Institution's Elementary Education program located in the North Eastern United States has been developing a strong school-university partnership over the past four years. In December of 1994, the two partners received funding through the initial Goals 2000 grants offered by the Department of Education to create a collaborative partnership that would be actualized through the establishment of a Professional Development School. While a great deal of progress and movement towards establishing a relationship between these partners and the brainstorming of possibilities for a Professional Development School was made during the first three years of the collaborative funded by Goals 2000 money (see, for example, Dana & Hernandez, 1998), one area that had not been focused on was a conscious effort to reform the teacher education program while simultaneously making professional inquiry a central feature of this school.

To these ends, during the 1998-1999 school year the partnership embarked on the creation of a Professional Development School targeted at reforming the teacher education program, as well as building an inquiry oriented culture within this newly formed PDS site. Frankes, Valli, and Cooper (1998), in a review of research on Professional Development Schools, discuss three roles mentors assume as they participate in PDS work. These roles are teacher as decision-maker, teacher as teacher educator, and teacher as researcher. In this same review, Frankes et al. conclude that the

role of teacher as researcher, critical to PDS sites, has not developed to the same extent as the roles of teacher as teacher educator and teacher as decision-maker. Since these interconnected roles are critical to the reform of teacher education, the absence of any one of these roles (teacher as teacher educator, teacher as decision-maker, teacher as researcher) becomes problematic (Dana, 1998).

Hence, with the goal of developing each of these roles into the evolving PDS sites, I focused our attention on these phases in the creation of this Professional Development School. The first phase, beginning in January of 1998, explicitly recognized the importance of "teacher as decision maker" and focused on providing vehicles for mentor teachers to participate in the groundwork for the PDS. For example, teachers developed an intern selection procedure and actively participated in the selection of their year-long interns drawn from a pool of undergraduate prospective teacher applicants. The second phase, which began in September of 1998, recognized the importance of developing the role of "teacher as teacher educator." During this phase, the traditional student teaching handbook was discarded and teachers were given the space to create an individual intern plan that met the needs of the intern and classroom teacher. Finally, beginning in January, 1999, the PDS work turned to inquiry which actively involved the mentor teachers in teacher research.

Research Methodology

The interpretive methods (Erickson, 1986) employed for this study involved the collection and interpretation of qualitative data over an eighteen month period. A constructivist epistemology (Bruner, 1986) was embodied into the collection and interpretation of this data. Constructivists view learning as an interpretive process in

which individuals engage in unique constructions of knowledge as they make sense of their experiences (Bentley, 1993; Fleury, 1993). This exploratory study employed a descriptive case study methodology as presented by Merriam (1988). The unit of analysis was mentor teachers who worked within Mountainside Elementary, a newly formed Professional Development School. These teachers were selected using a "unique case selection" procedure which encourages participants to be selected based on a unique attribute inherent in the population (Goetz and LeCompte, 1984). In this case, the unique attribute was the teachers' collective decision to collaboratively engage in creating an inquiry focused year-long undergraduate internship within a Professional Development School context.

The techniques used to enhance the quality of the analysis and ensure trustworthiness of the study include source triangulation, method triangulation, and member checks. Source triangulation is defined as "checking out the consistency of different sources within the same method" (Patton, 1990, p.464). Method triangulation includes "checking out the consistency of findings generated by different data-collection methods" (Patton, 1990, p. 464). The sources used in this analysis included: 1) journal entries written by mentors and interns, 2) fieldnotes, 3) interviews, 4) e-mail, 5) meeting minutes, and 6) transcripts from PDS meetings. Each teacher participated in 2-3 semi-structured interviews focusing on the following three major categories of information: 1) a biographical description of who the teacher was as a professional, 2) a description of the teacher's experiences as a mentor within this PDS, and 3) comments about the problems and possibilities for their Professional Development Schools. In order to obtain data, the following procedures were used.

1. The length of the interviews ranged from 30 to 90 minutes, allowing time to explore questions in depth.
2. Interviews were conducted privately with no interruptions.
3. Teachers were assured of anonymity in the reporting of their responses.
4. Interview questions were used to guide the discussion.
5. Probing questions encouraged teachers to expand on their responses.
6. The questions focused on responsibilities and events which were poignant to the teacher's work lives.
7. The interviews were tape-recorded, allowing the researcher to concentrate on the teacher's responses and ask probing questions.

The tape recordings of each interview were then transcribed, allowing for accurate reporting of the teachers' responses and enabling the researcher to interpret specific responses in the context of the entire transcript. The typical length of the responses was in the form of many paragraphs.

Data across the six cases were examined in order to identify common patterns. Additionally, as patterns emerged, I conducted systematic searches of the data, looking for disconfirming and confirming evidence to support the themes that emerged (Erickson, 1986). I also conducted periodic member checks with the teachers, the principal, and other PDAs as part of the analysis.

After reviewing the data set multiple times, themes emerged in each of three roles- *teacher as participant, teacher as teacher educator*, and *teacher as researcher*. These three roles emerged in three phases over an eighteen month period of time. Interestingly, the first phase *teacher as participant* played out differently in this study than in the work of Frankes, Valli, and Cooper (in press). Instead of *teacher as decision-maker*, these teachers struggle with the notion of *teacher as participant* during this first phase. As will be described, these teachers are looking for ways to effectively participate in this partnership. The remaining sections of this paper will present portraits of these

mentors and an analysis of issues relevant to their work in each phase. In reporting the results, I have left the words of the mentors intact, using salient quotes and vignettes from journals, interviews, and observations.

Participant Selection and School Description

This study focuses on the work of six mentor teachers within this newly formed Professional Development School. This small, six classroom, Kindergarten through 2nd grade school, is nestled on the side of a mountain just outside of a university town. The school's size as well as layout facilitates collaboration among faculty members, paraprofessionals, and support staff. For example, at each grade level, two teachers team with each other and this teaming is supported by organizational structures (e.g., meetings and common planning time), as well as the physical connection of the classrooms. The teachers in this school see Mountainside as a unique place to teach as evidenced in the following statements:

> Mountainside is just a wonderful little school... Mountainside is really what I would call a neighborhood school. You know all the children when they come in, we know children in kindergarten, first graders and second graders...We discuss everything. And I feel there is no competition. I've never seen that here. We usually can come to a consensus or a compromise. (Lydia, Interview 1-99)

> We have a social life within our school. The teachers in this school eat together. Our lunch time is the same 45 minutes so we always have time to catch up with each other. It is really informal. But, we are all together and we have a chance to talk and laugh. It is a wonderful place to work. It is ideal for the children, the teachers, and the parents. It's such a small school and we are really more like a family. There is a definite sense of community. Parents feel comfortable coming in. Everyone knows the children. We really just make decisions by talking things over. It usually isn't much of a problem. Most of the time we talk it over and the majority sort of rules. We compromise. We get to see everyone at lunch. That really helps us. We see each other everyday. We can talk with each other

> and that is very important contact. We talk about everything at lunch, school stuff, home stuff, things that come up during the day. (Beth, Interview, 1-99)

> Oh, this is a wonderful place. I can't imagine any better place to work. And I know a lot of people would like to be here. I am so lucky. Everyone gets along really well and I am so lucky that I have a teaching partner that we just mesh so well together. Our administrator makes everyone understand that they have lots of choices as far as how to teach and how to interpret the curriculum and that sort of thing. This makes teaching really a pleasure at our school as well as makes you feel like you are important to the curriculum, children, and school. This is what helps to make the classroom the kind of place where you want your own children to go, learn, and explore. Mountainside really has a chance to make a place where it is comfortable for children to learn. They can become risk takers because there is the support. (Lynnete, Interview, 1-99)

> Of all the places I have taught, I think Mountainside is my absolute favorite. We have a lot of parental support here. People feel comfortable with the fact that we are meeting the needs of our kids academically and socially. . We have parents that always want to know what they can do to help and this creates a very non-threatening climate. The kinds of families we have here are just wonderful. We are a small school in numbers and we do feel like a family and it is just a wonderful place to work. We also have just young children and that is probably a factor too. We can do many things together. We have good communication between teachers and families. Families are really involved in their children's lives. We do have some children who are at risk but not the numbers as in other schools where I have worked. It is really a nice easy place to work and you can do so many other things as far as creativity with the children. Our administrator is very accepting and if it is something that is reasonable then she totally backs us. And if there is any conflict at all, our principal is very level headed and she doesn't like to play games. She is very fair and is also a very strong leader. She does her best to really make us feel like a team. The size of the school really helps with this. The teachers that are here are very collaborative and don't have their own agendas. It isn t that we don't have different opinions, but I really feel like we work well as a team and obviously she has something to do with that. (Betsy, Interview, 1-99)

Clearly, the teachers at Mountainside Elementary recognize and value the unique and supportive culture of their school. Interestingly, throughout the interviews, teachers

never mentioned a need for anything to change within their school. In fact, as will be indicated later, the teachers are most concerned with preserving, rather than altering, this culture or system that they so deeply value.

Interestingly, each of these teachers became involved in the PDS work for very different reasons. The following excerpts are attempts to portray the diverse background and experiences each of the teachers bring to their participation in the PDS work and a salient introductory quote indicates their differing motivations for participating in this work. Their motivations contribute to their experiences and the stories that they live out as they work with interns in this newly formed PDS. Although I have elected to use pseudonyms for each of these six teachers and the school's name, to the greatest extent possible and with the highest respect[2] I have chosen to use their words rather than substitute my own.

Kelly
"I am doing this because I am a new teacher and the principal needed me to participate."

I graduated in 1985 and it seems like yesterday. I was in special education and my student teaching was in a private school kindergarten/1st grade with severely emotionally disturbed children. There were 7 children and the problems these poor children had were unbelievable. After my student teaching I was hired as a long term substitute in K-6 special education where half of my children were in a full day resource room and half were there part time. Eventually, I was offered a permanent position which was teaching in the same kind of classroom. I needed to continue my education for permanent certification, so for my 24 credits, I decided to go back and get my elementary certification just because it made sense to do that for me. The paperwork, the IEP's, the new comprehensive evaluation which were done every two years, I think did me in. I was spending more time doing paper work than I was teaching, and that is not what I wanted to do. It was never the children. I was always an advocate for special ed children in the regular classroom. A first grade came open and I bid on that and I spent 2 years in 1st grade and then I resigned to stay home with my youngest child. I had a little

[2] I would like to thank the six teachers who felt their work and this study were worthwhile enough to make explicit their experiences and their thinking about their work.

day care in my home but then I decided to substitute to get my foot in the door and go back to full time work as a classroom teacher. I was hired last year in a middle school learning support room and then this first grade position came open this year. That's my teaching experience.

My special education background has helped me be better able to adapt to whatever students had to learn and I think I am more aware of individuality in the classroom and how you just do things differently for some of the kids.

Although I did student teach for special education certification, they waived student teaching for my elementary certification. But, my student teaching was intense. We started with 11 student teachers in our group and ended with 7. I had a cooperating teacher and I had a supervisor. Both wrote narrative pages and I was given a grade. She would have announced and unannounced visits. She was only assigned to the 11 of us and we were all located in the same school so it was easy for her. She was always there. I remember during student teaching I would come home and work until 2-3 in the morning, go to bed and get back up at 6 o'clock. I don't know how we did it. That is just a part of student teaching and you do as much as you can do because you want to make sure you do it the best that you can.

I became a mentor this year because I was offered the job. Everyone else was being a mentor with an intern. Would you like one, the principal asked? I said, "yes." Really when I said yes I had no idea what this was. None whatsoever. But being very flexible like I am, it really didn't matter to me. What I heard was that I would have another person in the classroom and knowing the classroom that I was going to have, I thought that sounds wonderful. And then my initial thought was I felt very sorry for whoever has me because I am still learning about teaching here in a first grade classroom. But after living through the beginning of this program, I think it is wonderful for the children to have the extra adult in the classroom. (Interview, 12-98)

Lydia

"The only reason I'm doing this is because it is my alternative evaluation[3]."

I started my teaching in this district as a paraprofessional. Then I worked for eight years in 3rd, 2nd and 4th grade. It was mostly 3rd grade. I then retired from the District for one year and then I was hired back. I taught four more years in 2nd grade and then I wanted a change so I moved to Mountainside and I taught kindergarten for 4 years. Now this is my 5th year back in 2nd grade at Mountainside.

I graduated back in the 60's and the only thing I can really remember is that we went out to different schools once a week before my student teaching so I really did not work in schools. I was always in charge of little kids so it wasn't that I didn't have experience but we didn't really see school settings and I just remember going out like once a week to watch reading in some classrooms which was very traditional. Then, my student teaching experience was in a town where you have lots of executives, so you had children who were very able, very good students and sharp too .... I had very traditional co-op teacher. She had been teaching for 27 years and we sat in rows. She had the top

[3] The alternative evaluation is a part of the teacher evaluation negotiated plan in this district.

reading group. There were 27 excellent readers in her group. Everybody sat in his or her rows. She started with the top of the first row and everybody read a sentence and they went all around the room. When we finished our story, we got out our workbooks and then we were assigned workbook pages and when the workbook pages were done you got in a line in front of her desk or my desk and we marked the workbook pages. You were silent in line and when you marked the workbook pages, you went back to your desk, corrected the workbook pages and got back in line. So the hour reading was mostly spent waiting for your turn to read your sentence or standing in line silently waiting for the red mark on your workbook pages. That's how I learned to teach so it was a very unique experience.

I always felt my co-op had one year of teaching but she did it for 27 years. I remember one Christmas she upset me. She had a Santa that was very pale white pink and very light green hanging on her door and one of the children on his way rushing out tore it and she said he was no better than his dad and his dad wasn't a good student so what could you possibly expect from this little boy. She grabbed him and she started hitting him and the more she hit him the angrier she got and I will just never forget he was screaming, she was screaming, she was hitting him and I just became hysterical and that is actually when I went to my advisor and said, "I'm quitting, I don't think I can do this." He talked me into staying with her for the rest of the 15 weeks but it was a very unique experience to say the least.

At the university, I have just taken graduate level courses. I do not have my Masters. I have an equivalency through the district, but I do not have my Masters. In courses I took a couple in the beginning, British Education courses, sponsored by the university, focused on really individualized education in the British way with projects and everybody is working on their own project and that was really interesting. I enjoyed that one.

I have had wonderful student teachers in the past and I have had not so wonderful student teachers and that was really hard. I had one very terrible student teacher when I was in kindergarten. I've had excellent pre-student teachers and I have had one that was absolutely terrible. Well, two. I have at times felt that the university was not very supportive with me. I had to deal with it and I gave her a D. Her father called me and just reamed me out that I ruined his daughter's education. I just felt there was no support. So I didn't take students after that for awhile cause I just thought they left me hanging. A few years later, I tried again and this time I thought I had very good support. But I have had some wonderful pre-student teachers and wonderful student teachers.

Why did I take them? That is really a good question. Really, in the beginning I took them because people just asked me to take them and I felt that it was my duty because other people had them so I took them because you are kind of pressured into taking them. Later when my friends were supervisors, I took them as a favor for them. I'm being terribly honest here. I feel that most of the time I can handle my classes alone and most of the time we do have paraprofessionals. I used parents and I guess I had more control over my help when they are paraprofessionals and parents than when you are asked to have a student come in. I think sometimes when you're just taking whatever the university gives you, you are kind of stuck with what you get for the 10-12-15 weeks and you do the best you can.

I guess I am disappointed so far with the internship (December, 1998). I don't see any difference, especially in the beginning of the year with what the university has ever offered. The syllabus to me was still the same. This was the same program except the interns were in school longer. I was disappointed. (Interview, 12-98)

Beth

"I'm doing this as a part of my alternative evaluation."

This is my 20th year in this district. Before, I taught for a little over two years in another district. I've taught 2nd grade and the first year I had a split 2nd-3rd grade. I did my student teaching in 3rd grade so you can see that my experience is really in primary. I have also taught 1st grade math.

My student teaching I did in 1969 in a new area but it was not what I would call a very enriched community even though the school was very nice and the children were lovely but it wasn't like this district. The student teaching experience wasn't too good. However, I loved the children and I enjoyed working with them but it was a negative experience because I think my cooperating teacher tended to be very old-fashioned and she would teach by the book. My supervisor thought you should throw the book away and of course teaching had changed and I was caught in the middle. They didn't like each other and I wasn't sure what to do and again my supervisor was very supportive in that you still are a visitor in this person's classroom. So basically if she tells you to use the book, that is what you have to do. I was allowed to teach my unit and things like that but if something didn't work out she would always say if you had used the book it would have worked. The children were scared of her and I was a little scared of her too. She was not a warm person and you didn't feel a lot of positive things but I learned from the experience things I don't want to do.

I took a few years off to have my children then when I went back I was working in an after school center and one of the teachers saw me working with the children and suggested that I apply for a job.

I have been lucky and have had wonderful experiences with my student teachers. I have only had a couple student teachers but the experiences have been positive. In fact, the student teacher I had last year I had in 2nd grade and came back to be my student teacher. I was going to be evaluated this year and I thought this would be something that I could do for my evaluation. I was willing to try the Professional Development School idea for that. And I think the other thing I am glad to see that we are getting more of a structure of guidelines for what is expected cause I think in the beginning we were questioning just how much. There was really nothing for direction--That doesn't mean that we have to have something that says you do this and that, but I am glad we are getting guidelines. (Interview, 12-98)

Betsy

"I really want more adult hands in my classroom."

This is my 24th year of teaching. I started right out of college. I taught in first grade for a number of years and then wanted to make a change. At the time I was working on my Masters in Developmental Reading. I then taught half-day kindergarten and half-day Title I/Chapter I reading. I did that for a number of years still within the same district. We had federal budget cuts so they chopped down the reading program and I went to a self-contained second grade classroom. My husband went back to graduate school so we relocated and I was Title I teacher in grades 1-6 and following that I had some kindergarten experience in a different district. We had a pre-kindergarten program for children who were old enough to go to kindergarten but from a developmental standpoint they weren't ready. So I had half-day of regular kindergarten and a half-day of developmental kindergarten. I did that for 6-8 years. Then we moved to this district and I taught a 5/6 split for half days. I did that for several years and then went to 1st grade. Now, this is my 3rd year in kindergarten. So I have done a lot of different levels and kind of jobs in an elementary setting.

As far as my training as a student a hundred years ago. I went to a teachers' university. My mother even went there. It was a pretty non-traditional program that promoted whole language at that time, but most of the schools that we were placed in were more traditional. There was a campus school so during our freshman year we had experience on campus in a classroom. My student teaching experience was in more of a traditional setting. It was in a small town and I taught first grade. They had a basal reading program, a social studies book, a science book, a phonics book, math book and so it was all traditional. There wasn't any integration. The supervisors came only if there were problems. They showed up, they gave you a little time to get acquainted, then they observed. I would guess about every other week. I am not sure what my supervisor's background was. I assume he was a former teacher but I don't know. He was around for a long time.

We had to turn in a lesson plan and he would then sit down and meet with us and try to troubleshoot if there were any problems between the supervising teacher and the student teacher. We only student taught for 9 weeks. We had lots of experience in the lab school and we could go to other towns, like our home towns, during breaks. We got written evaluations from him on a specific form. There was a specific form for us to fill out as far as lessons and expectations they had. It was pretty cut and dried exactly what we were to do? The primary weakness that I had was the teacher I was working with. She retired the year after I was there. She would make me cringe how she would talk to children sometimes. So I really felt I had a conflict with that because I didn't see what I thought I would see and what I hoped I would see to help me model and to grow to be a better teacher. There was a lot of pushing kids around and yanking them. It was a public school. Taking them by the arm and that was really hard for me. The teacher thought I was blind and I know she thought I was far too relaxed to notice. It was not necessarily a good match between the cooperating teacher and myself. I didn't really feel like I saw anything new. I just don't look at student teaching as one of the keystones of my professional career.

I would like field experiences to be more what you're doing in the intern program. When I see our interns, I really feel like you have to initially play on people's strengths and what they feel comfortable doing and what they like to do. Let them get immersed

into the classroom that way and then from there we can help them and show them resources and have them go observe.

I had a pre-student teacher who stayed with me as a student teacher last year and just thoroughly had a wonderful experience with her. Because I had a good experience, I felt that my students wouldn't suffer. I could see how having another adult in the classroom totally enhanced the children's education. (Interview, 12-98)

Lynnete

"I know it is good for the kids and I enjoy working with the university."

I took a different route from many other teachers. I was an English major and then I was a flight attendant. One day I was working with my daughter's Girl Scout troop and I realized how much I enjoyed working with children especially that age. They were kindergarten age. That was where the seed was planted because there were a lot of teachers in my family and I always thought that teaching was something that I would never want to do. But then I realized that I did and then because of something that happened in the airlines, I wasn't going to be able to work part time anymore which was very important to me, I decided that it was time to retire. I went back to school and got certified.

I did that part time for awhile and then full time at the end. That was very enjoyable. I did my student teaching in a first grade classroom in a rural school. Student teaching was a little less enjoyable only because it was the very first time my 22 year veteran teacher had worked with a student teacher and I think it was upsetting for her to have someone else in the room. She wasn't used to it and she would get upset when I tried things that my supervisor suggested. So I was always nervous. But I was working with the children, the most wonderful children. It was a great half year. I think it would have been really beneficial to have a whole year in a classroom. In fact, I thought that I needed more time even before that experience just to observe.

Then I finished and there was still a half year left in the school year. I finished in December so I was trying to get substitute teaching jobs and I was also volunteering here. My son was in kindergarten here. I loved that so much. It was a lot of fun, but I also got to know other people here, like the principal at the time. And so I was hired the next year when there was an opening in kindergarten and I was so thrilled. I really was. I love teaching 1st grade but kindergarten is really the place that I hope I will be for the rest of my life. It is just heaven and it really means so much to me. I always look at my priorities and try to think what is the most important. My family is the most important and kindergarten is next. It is really a very special place.

I have been working with the university faculty on special projects for about 3 years and I just remembered Nancy coming one day and saying, "We would like to establish the collaborative. What do you want? What's your wish list. And for me I've always just wanted somebody else in the room. It would be wonderful to have another teacher to team teach with. I think in kindergarten the more one on one time a child has with a person the better and so that was what my wish was. Just wonderful people in the room.

I knew how uncomfortable my student teaching process was and I wanted for someone else to have a better experience. I wanted them to be able to experiment, to try

new things. I wanted them to have a place where they wouldn't feel pressure from me that we would grow together and they would feel comfortable to grow and to suggest new things. (Interview, 12-98)

Caran
"I think it is good for teacher education."

I have taught first grade in two different schools in the same district for 14 years. Teaching is a second degree for me. After getting my undergraduate degree, I came across this MAT program. When she told me about it, it just sounded really good. First, it was intensive. A one year intensive teaching experience, which really caught my eye, with full time teaching with a cooperating teacher. So that was very attractive to me because it made sense for someone interested in looking at the theory and the practice.

I have a Masters and as a part of my program, I conducted my own research and wrote a paper while in the schools teaching full time along side my cooperating teacher. So it gave me those experiences which I thought would give me an edge and I think they did. The research project was really interesting because a lot of it involved just looking at children and observing children closely, asking them questions, getting a feel for how little kids think and so forth.

My student teaching was in a combined 1st-2nd grade and I think I had an excellent mentor teacher who was just very supportive and very caring, very dedicated to kids and teaching. The other neat thing about it was that they only took about 25% of their kids from faculty kids. They had kids from different socio-economic groups. They gave scholarships. Half the class was Caucasian, the other half was African American, Asian, Puerto Rican, this incredible mix. And I remember really liking that. She just seemed very accepting. She wasn't judgmental. I never remember her raising her voice the entire year. She didn't have to. This was a woman, probably in her 50's who had been teaching quite some time. These teachers did not teach there for their salaries. They had Masters and PhD's. A lot of them were at the university too, plus teaching plus interns. So these teachers were really and truly interested and dedicated to teacher training and kid's learning and having some help in your classroom.

I think I am also highly motivated when it comes to my studies and when I am taking a course, I am taking it because I am interested in it. I was considering doing a Ph.D. but I decided I just didn't want to do that. But I like taking course work and love learning and like to take what interests me. I did take course work and enjoyed being back in the university setting which I have always loved both as an undergraduate and a graduate student.

I was asking to have full year student teacher even before this program and they said no. So because of my experiences of thinking that's where it's at. The kids need to get into the classrooms. They need to be in there as much as possible, doing all different things, and getting as much exposure. The exposure will help them along with the theory and the coursework. So when this program came up, I already didn't need to be sold since I really believed in this and I also believed part of being a professional involves helping to train future professionals.

Somebody took me when I was green and I'm sure that there were things that I added to her job even though I helped her. But I never got a sense of being unwelcome,

unwanted or that she was unwilling to help. So I think those are some real personal reasons and also some beliefs philosophically about being a professional and willing to not just train but help with the development of future teachers. (Interview, 12-98)

In each of the above cases, the teachers of Mountainside Elementary agreed to participate for different reasons. Interestingly, not one of them mentioned the reasons discussed by Powell and McGowan (1996) in their study of teachers' work in PDSs. This study looked at the reasons teachers chose to be a part of a PDS and found that teachers based their decisions to take part in the PDS collaborative on their expectations of greater control over their environment. Additionally, they found teachers hoped the formation of the PDS would provide opportunities for them to assert greater control over their professional growth and that the teachers' desire for control over their environment increased through their participation in the PDS. As indicated in the above biographical sketches, the decision of these six teachers to participate in PDS work ranged from genuine enthusiasm for reform in teacher education to being enticed by the building principal to participate as a part of their teacher evaluation. However, in looking across the biographical data and data collected after the PDS work began, two beliefs emerge. The six teachers indicate that they believe the internship will benefit children and they believe the internship could enhance the field experience for prospective teachers. At this point it, is important to note that one teacher who participated in the conceptualization phase of the PDS work quit her job because she did not feel the space existed for her to grow professionally in this district. She provides this brief biographical sketch and reflection upon her own professional life

> I began as a kindergarten teacher 23 years ago and I have been learning ever since. The challenge of teaching is important to me because I am always trying to understand the diverse nature of children and the experiences that they bring to school. This leads me to question a lot of

> what is done in schools, as well as my own abilities to improve schooling for children. I have been fortunate in my work experience to have been engaged in activities that allow for risk taking and provide challenges. I've held a number of specialist positions that I've used as a vehicle for helping other teachers develop professionally, and I've worked with colleagues who in my opinion are the best of the best. But every few years I feel a need to return to the classroom and make sure that I understand what teaching is all about and how theory and practice meld together. And I do believe that of all the things I've done, I teach little ones best. That's who I am, that's what I am. When they won't let me teach in ways that I feel respects these children, then it is time to move on.

This teacher's account offers an alternative perspective of teachers' work within Mountainside Elementary School. This teacher resigned in protest because she did not feel space existed for her to grow professionally in ways that she felt respects these children in this district. This teacher's experience contributes to our understanding of the existing professional culture of Mountainside Elementary. Her questioning of the professional culture will become relevant in the discussion of Phase One.

What follows is an analysis of the mentor teacher experience as this year's PDS work evolves through three overlapping phases of teacher work: *conceptualization*, *teacher as teacher educator*, and *teacher as researcher*. Although these phases of PDS development are encountered sequentially, they are not intended to be discrete entities and in reality they are interactive.

Phase One: Conceptualization
What will this Professional Development School look like?

Description of Teachers' Work

During this first phase, *Conceptualization*, teachers were introduced to the concept of Professional Development Schools and the format for this year-long internship. This work was a culmination of the relationship that had begun four years

ago, as well as a beginning point for the formal Professional Development School partnership. During an initial meeting, the university leadership led the teachers in a discussion centered around the vision for this PDS organized by "the three E's:" *"enhancing" the educational experience of all children, "ensuring" a high quality teacher education experience, and "engaging" teachers in furthering their own professional growth as teacher educators and teachers*. This phase also included the teachers creating an intern selection procedure. The work of the mentors during this stage consisted of planning and problem solving meetings, the review of intern applications, and a series of interviews. More specifically, the teachers discussed PDS issues at staff meetings, visited with interns during school visits, reviewed applications, conducted interviews, attended a social gathering to get to know interns, and facilitated the intern-mentor matching. Additionally, three of the six teachers engaged in independent readings about Professional Development Schools for university credit.

Tensions of Participation

Although the university and school district leadership used every existing and available structure (inservice time, additional after-school meetings, release time, and at-home work) to engage these teachers in the dialogue and the planning of this PDS work, evidence exists that the teachers did not feel empowered to meaningfully participate in conceptualizing the internship. In an effort to highlight some of the difficulties encountered during the conceptualization phase and the problems associated with authentic teacher participation, I will share three key understandings: teachers lack the

renewal piece of the vision for PDS work, teachers silence themselves, and teachers silence each other.

Lack of Vision

Writing about the "lack of anything" is problematic because it is difficult to "prove" that something doesn't exist. In this case, an impression that continually arose in the leadership's informal discussion was the absence of talk about professional growth and renewal in the work of mentor teachers.

> Nancy and I talked about ways we hoped the teachers would see the Professional Development School as a vehicle for allowing them to participate in meaningful professional exploration and growth. However, it seems like they just don't understand the possibilities yet, or possibly don't even see a reason to question their practices. Nancy has often said that she hopes that renewal piece will come as they begin participating in inquiry and begin asking themselves questions about their practices. (Researcher's journal, 10/98)

Since "renewal" is a component of this PDS work as defined by our "three E's," the absence of this talk suggested a missing link in our chain. In analyzing the mentor teacher biographical data and the mentors' explicit reasons for participating in this work, it becomes readily apparent that none of the teachers committed to PDS work as a vehicle for enhancing their own professional growth.

> I am doing this because I am a new teacher and the principal needed me to participate. (Kelly, interview)
> The only reason I'm doing this is because it is my alternative evaluation. (Lydia, interview)
> I'm doing this as a part of my alternative evaluation. (Beth, interview)
> I really want more adult hands in my classroom. (Betsy, interview)
> I know it is good for kids and I enjoy working for the university. (Lynnete, interview)
> I think it is good for teacher education. (Caran, interview)

Even when explicitly asked, "How do you see yourself growing professionally because of your participation?" their answers included the following themes.

> I'll pick up a few ideas from my intern.
> It will help me stay fresh.
> I'll have a better understanding of my students. (Researcher's journal 9-98)

Using these quotes and the responses to above question as evidence that the teachers do not share the vision of renewal is not to belittle their reasons for participating. In fact, the majority of these mentors, admirably, based their decision on wanting to better meet the needs of the children in their classrooms. Finally, as the year unfolded, it became clear that "questioning one's practice" was not a part of the teachers' culture at this school. As indicated in the description of the school context, these teachers are quite satisfied with their existing work context and are primarily interested in preserving their work culture and sharing this "wonderful" context and their expertise with prospective teachers.

This finding is consistent with Griffin's (1995) assertion that teachers typically do not question their own pedagogical expertise. In fact, as testified by a teacher in Griffin's work:

> We were selected for this work exactly because we are considered to be outstanding teachers. No one has questioned whether we do a good job with students. In fact, we have the reputation of doing really outstanding work. (Griffin, 1995, p. 39)

Teachers do not define a good teacher as one who questions the work they do with children. Thus, maybe the idea of teachers talking about how their participation in the Professional Development School will enhance their own learning or enhance the learning of their students is not a "developmentally appropriate" expectation based on the existing teaching culture? Do these teachers define a good teacher as one who questions

the work they do with children? At this point, little evidence exists to suggest that these teachers work in or value a professional inquiry-oriented school culture

Silencing Selves

After the decision had been reached regarding the process of intern selection, many of the teachers discussed their disappointment in the process adopted. This interview process was created in a meeting with the mentor teachers, principal, and university leadership. This intern selection process developed as a result of a lengthy discussion with the entire staff sharing their ideas. As a part of this discussion, the principal suggested that the teachers use the same model for interviewing interns that the principals engage in when hiring teachers. Since there was no apparent disagreement, the university leadership felt the decision was agreed upon (researcher memo, 4-98) and the discussion was closed. Interestingly, as a result of adopting the principal's suggestion, the teachers felt like the interview process was not something that they had created, but rather the work of the principal as evidenced in the following remark:

> This was an autocratic decision made by an autocratic leader to select the interns in this way. (Caran, Expanded field notes, 3-98, 48-49)

Another teacher commented about the principal's impact on the intern interview plan:

> I was upset about the way that the principal controlled the process of how we selected the interns. We wanted it a certain way and then the principal said they did it [hired teachers] a different way and that is what happened. (Lydia, Expanded field notes, 4-28-98, 26-28)

The teachers' comments indicated their feeling that they did not have a voice in the decision of how to select the interns. As a researcher, I found this perspective interesting

since in reviewing anecdotes of the "talk," maintained as a means of documenting the process, the teachers appeared to approve of the intern selection process adopted. In investigating further, what was found was that the teachers used their voice to discuss possibilities for the internship selection process, but did not use their voice to object to the principal's suggestion and defend an alternative idea. Their unwillingness to disagree with the principal made it look like they agreed with the process adopted. It was not until much later that the university leadership recognized that the teachers did not feel comfortable with the selection process. At that time, I began to identify some issues the teachers had with sharing their ideas in the presence of an authority figure, who in this case was the principal. This became a critical incident for the teachers because they believed the selection process was something that they would develop.

Contentment with Status Quo

Another incidence that related to voice appeared as a teacher discussed the possibilities of exploring some individual professional interests as a part of the Professional Development School work. At this point, the story of voice takes an unexpected twist. These same teachers who were willing to withhold their own voice when their opinions conflicted with the principal, ultimately raised their voice to silence a colleague. The discussion that follows illustrates how most teachers were not comfortable with this teacher's interest in challenging some of the existing structures of her classroom practice. The following interaction describes the manner that colleagues reacted to a teacher who was interested in challenging the district curriculum by asking for a new space for her own curriculum inquiry.

> I'm always talking about inquiry based education. How I'd really like to structure whatever the theme is and have it come from the children. And have lots of questions. With one or two helpers for support, I'd like to take 9 weeks and explore that option- how does it work, what are its problems, what kinds of resources are available to me, what's the management aspect, how do I assess- all of these are questions I might have. In my mind I want to do this, but I have to try it and massage it. That might be something I would like to try? It might not be. Would I have the support as long as I met the goals and objectives? Would I have support to do that? (Meeting, 4/98)

Within minutes this teacher's colleagues made the following comments:

> What are you going to use for instructional books? Any kind of instructional books have to go through a process to be approved by the board so your gonna have to ask your questions to, ok now in the next nine weeks, it's going to take me nine weeks to go through this process, so we will answer your question 9 weeks down the road.
>
> If you were doing a different unit, you would have to have some freedom to select books... (inaudible)
>
> Support? Well, first of all, I think that ,that's the first step is going to your principal and saying here is my plan, cause it is an individual type thing, this is what I would like to do. What do you think about it?
> It really affects the book pool too. Cause you have to get it checked out....
>
> Now you are talking about dollars. Okay, I mean if you do an inquiry based unit and one class decides one direction to go and you are going to have to support that unit some way and then another year you go this way.
>
> Dollars for materials.
>
> Have you observed this somewhere, Patty?
>
> Yeah, but you also mentioned that in language arts, that they were really good problem solvers but they were weaker...
>
> I think, it just strikes me as, I guess the initial part is, again it's just a personal reaction that I don't feel imprisoned by the curriculum and I think... and they give the guidance of which ones are really exciting to them. I don't feel that it is constraining, it sounds to you it is really constraining.

> Right but that is what I mean, I would think that you would have to approach whoever approves it, or whoever, have a plan, and do it on an individual basis then to our administrators.
>
> Does that mean the university is going to add funds to support any kind curricular change that we come up with? (Meeting, 4/98)

After this teacher had risked sharing her ambitious inquiry topic with her peers and considered her colleagues, she sat quietly. In fact, as the story plays out this mentor teacher quit her job and left the faculty at Mountainside Elementary. Ultimately, these teachers demonstrated how teachers could silence each other when they encounter something that is different from the status quo. What seems to be building is a case for contentment with the status quo and the evidence seems to present barriers to major change.

Phase Two: Teachers as Teacher Educators
Are we teacher educators?

Description of Teachers' Work:

During this second phase, *Teachers as Teacher Educators*, the teachers began their daily work with an intern in their room. This work included teachers' planning and implementing instruction with interns, providing feedback, completing observations, and attending meetings focused on the roles and responsibilities of a mentor teacher in these PDSs. During this phase, the interns worked along side the teachers, as well as completed 12 credits of "university coursework" in math, science, and social studies. The following example illustrates the high level of meaningful participation, five of the six interns had early in their field experience and the way all of the teachers except Lydia organized their classrooms for instruction.

I entered the room and immediately noticed the teacher, intern, and paraprofessional engaged in conversation with children. The teacher was helping the child with attendance papers, the intern was working with a child at his desk, and the paraprofessional was talking to the children as they were hanging up their coats...

Within minutes, the children were gathered up front on the carpet with the intern while the teacher and paraprofessional were each meeting with individual children at the back of the room. I wondered if the three conversations going on in the room were distracting to the children, but they all seemed unaffected by the multiple conversations occurring. The intern worked with the majority of the class on the morning opening and followed the opening with a morning letter. During this time, children moved in and out of the full group with ease to work with the paraprofessional and the teacher. At the point, the teacher was completing individual assessments and the para was helping children with their Writer's Workshop pieces.

As the intern completed the morning letter, the teacher approached the group of children and together she and her intern discussed the morning's plans with the children. The children moved quietly to their language arts station and immediately engaged in work. The time on task, so far, appears incredible. At any given moment, there is an adult within an arm's reach of a child.

Soon the children were all actively at work at their language arts stations. The teacher worked at a round table in the back of her room with children using unit related reading books. The paraprofessional worked with children on their writing at the desks near the door in the front of the room. The intern was nestled on the floor working with the children on developing sight words. Near the back of the room, in the technology area, a group of students independently worked on the computers and listened to stories on tape. Each group of children was actively engaged in the small group activities. After 15 minutes the bell rang and the groups rotated to the next station. These children were ability grouped and each adult had a developmentally appropriate instructional piece for the each group of children. By the end of the hour, the children had engaged in a high degree of time on task. Because an adult was available to each child at all times, the children were able to remain on task for a long period of time. Additionally, many of the adults in the room seemed to be keeping some kind of records about each child's progress during the activity.

After centers were completed, the children prepared for recess. At this point, three adults (actually 4 including myself) were available to button, zip, and help with gloves and boots. Within minutes, this group of first graders was on their way outside.

> When the children came in, they prepared for math. The children gathered for a math opening at the carpet, this time led by the teacher, as the intern and paraprofessional did some preparation for the math stations. The teacher dismissed the children to stations which were led by the paraprofessional, intern, and teacher. In these stations, children participated in manipulative math activities focused on understanding the concept of subtraction. Once again the time on task for each child seemed incredible and the activity each child engaged in appeared developmentally appropriate. (Researcher Journal, 10-98)

There is some evidence that indicates the organizational structure of these classrooms substantively facilitates incorporating the intern into the daily work of teaching. This organizational component creates opportunities for intern pedagogical growth, streamlines planning, and contributes to children's learning.

Additionally, these teachers also typically met informally in person or over the phone with the building PDA[4] on a weekly basis to discuss, highlight, and troubleshoot their intern's progress:

> Today Lynnete and I sat down and discussed some of Sarah's strengths and weaknesses. I knew that Lynnete had much better insight into these questions because she spent each and every day with Sarah. Lynnete expressed that she was concerned about classroom management and that she knew that Sarah got very nervous when she taught. Together, we shared our impressions of Sarah's read aloud and brainstormed together ways to help her. We decided that Sarah should do some observations of Lynnete doing a read aloud and then create a rubric of what a good read aloud would look like to her. Next, we would tape Sarah doing a read aloud and then she could use that rubric to assess her own growth in that area. (Researcher Journal, 11-98)

As a part of the teachers' work during this phase, the teachers also received PDS information at faculty meetings, developed an advisory board, demanded the creation of a mentor teacher resource guide, and some teachers planned and taught a seminar for the

---

[4] PDA's are Professional Development Associates who represent the university field experience and work with interns and collaborate with classroom-based teacher educators.

interns. Those three teachers who were participating in this work for credit completed readings in the area of supervision and teacher development.

Tensions of Teacher Education:

During this phase, the university leadership did not provide the traditional student teacher handbook that they were accustomed. Instead, they asked the teachers to engage in developing an individualized plan for their own intern. The teachers were given a general outline of the internship year, the three E's, copies of the coursework syllabi, and the university conceptual framework as tools for creating this individualized intern experience. The tensions that became readily apparent in the mentor teachers' work during this phase included issues of time, growth, and defining their role as mentors.

Time

Both field notes and self-descriptions of the work of these teachers during the first half of the year, clearly indicate that teachers spend more time talking about their daily classroom work than when they teach in isolation. The following comments suggest the type of conversations that are becoming an additional part of the teachers' day:

> Having a full time student means that much of your time during specials and after school is spent talking and explaining procedures and the "why" of what you are doing. (Lydia, Journal response, #5-8, Dec. 1998)

Based on comments such as this and other field notes, Lydia looks at these conversations between herself and her intern as an "add-on" that is not a part of her daily work as a teacher. She sees these conversations only as a benefit to the intern. Beth echoes some of Lydia's concerns about time:

> There is a significant time commitment required by all participants during the first semester. This can be emotionally challenging for both the intern and the mentor. My husband can always judge how much time my work takes by the time he has dinner ready for me. It seems later and later. (Beth, Journal entry, #78-82, Dec. 1998)

Schneider, Seidman, and Cannone (1996) in their study of mentor teachers, also identified time as a serious concern of the teacher. In their study, mentor teachers described an overwhelming workload as they tried to balance classroom planning and interaction with students and interns. Additionally, mentors in their study struggled as they interacted daily with a student teacher who was full of doubts. The struggle became especially apparent when the teacher worked with a student who may be at risk for failure. This was a particularly draining experience for these teachers. Similarly, there is some indication that Lydia discusses this same frustration. Lydia struggles with the challenges of her work as a mentor since she has questions regarding her intern's ability as indicated in the following statement:

> Though having an extra person in the classroom is always good, I think I would have been more frustrated, if it hadn't been for my paraprofessional. We had worked together last year and she knew how we operated. I do need to remember that these students are fresh from class and have no classroom experience, so I should have no expectations. But I now feel that I should probably look for an intern who displays a bit of initiative, rather than one who sits and waits for all instructions. (Lydia, Journal response, #28-35, Dec. 1998)

Clearly, the intern's ability to navigate the classroom without constant direction has contributed to Lydia's frustration and possibly her characterization of an intern as a "time drainer."

Growth

Betsy's thoughts about the "talk" of working with an intern suggest an alternative viewpoint that was consistent with three other teachers:

> Throughout the semester, I have had an opportunity to verbalize and process my educational philosophy, schedules and routines, management techniques, and educational expectations. After teaching for more than two decades, many of these areas are performed automatically, but it has been good to be given the chance to articulate the "whys" of the important areas in working with a roomful of eager learners. (Betsy, Journal response, #8-12, Dec. 1998)

This reflection indicates that Betsy and the three other teachers clearly appreciate the extra time they spend talking with their interns. They are *experiencing growth through their discourse* with their interns and that this growth is something which they value. Although the mentor role was not without costs, satisfaction from experiencing this mentoring role exists. This supports the work of Schneider, Seidman, and Cannone (1996) who found that mentors experienced a sense of renewal when they had the opportunity to talk with colleagues breaking down their traditional sense of isolation. Similarly, according to Bullough et al. (1997) in their study of seven Professional Development Schools, evidence existed at five of the seven sites indicating that teachers become increasingly reflective about teaching when they work with interns over an extended period of time. One teacher described her growth:

> I think the greatest benefit for me was that I really learned what and how I teach because I had to explain my method. It was really self analysis. I would do something that was successful and I would have to say, "Now, why did that work?" (Bullough et al, 1997, p. 158)

These types of reflections suggest that teachers are engaging in inquiry as a part of a newly developing professional culture.

Defining Role as Teacher Educator

Throughout this first semester, the teachers appear to struggle with *defining their own role* and determining what their own responsibility is for intern emotional and pedagogical growth. One teacher describes the following tension:

> One insight I gained from watching Nancy the other day, reminded me that lately we have gotten away from our talks and why we are doing what we are doing... I think one of the most important things a mentor teacher needs to do is explain why the lesson you are teaching is important at that time, what you have done to prepare the children so they are ready for that lesson and then to think about what needs to follow...and I would like her to give me something to look for as she teaches so she begins to be more critical and thinking about improving her lessons. (Lydia, Journal response, #53-56 & #61-63, Dec. 1998)

Lydia is constructing her own understanding of her role as mentor as she watches her intern struggle with understanding the underlying framework of her lessons. Another teacher in her reflections on the first half of the year, highlights the need for a resource guide to help both intern and mentor understand their responsibilities during the year-long internship. Beth suggests:

> Teachers need to have an idea of what to expect from their interns at each stage of the school year. (Beth, Journal response #74-77, Dec. 1998)

The call for this resource guide came quite loudly from half of the teachers within this small building. These teachers were looking for structure to help them understand their role as a mentor and what they should expect from their interns' work within their classroom.

Before beginning our discussion of roles, clarification must be made between our understandings of "what is a mentor" and "what is a teacher educator." By taking away the "Handbook," the teachers were inadvertently moved from the role of support and

guidance which is part of "mentoring" to the role of "planning" and "responsibility" for "growth" which is part of teacher education.

Interestingly, all of the teachers within Mountainside were not anxious to have a resource guide but some indicated that they valued the flexibility they had in creating an appropriate experience for their intern and assuming some of the roles associated with teacher education as indicated in the following excerpt:

> I actually feel really badly that we have now created all of these guidelines for the internship. I valued the flexibility and the freedom to adjust the experience to the needs of my intern rather than feeling driven by the guidelines. I think too many of us become technicians of the work. I also believe that everyone is caught up in the fact that all the interns' experiences won't look the same. And that will make them feel that they are not doing it "right." (Caran, Interview #1, p.13, #10-17)

Caran demonstrates her lack of enthusiasm for the guidelines because she values the freedom associated with developing an appropriate experience for her own intern. Through these comments, Caran indicates a possible role shift from mentor teacher to teacher educator which I am beginning to see as two potentially different roles.

Although Caran's comments are the most clear in defining the role shift from "mentor" to "teacher educator," some evidence also exists that other teachers have begun to move in this same direction:

> Betsy has made arrangements for Amy to work with another teacher at Park City one day a week. This is a 5th grade teacher. Betsy initiated the request for Amy to have another experience beyond kindergarten and then followed through to find a placement for her. I felt excited that Betsy had made this happen for her intern. (Researcher Journal, Jan. 1999)

> Lynnete did a dynamite job of setting up a number of observations for Sarah. She knows Sarah's strengths and weaknesses so well that she can think of teachers that she knows who would be really good for Sarah to observe and talk with. (Researcher Journal, Jan. 1999)

> I find it exciting to see how the relationships and roles have developed between the intern and the teacher. One thing that comes to mind as I

> write this entry is the number of times that Kelly has suggested journal topics for Megan to write about. Clearly, Kelly is feeling like she is a teacher "providing meaningful assignments" rather than just a supportive person providing Megan with a space to learn her teaching techniques. (Researcher Journal, Jan. 1999)

> Because of Cheryl's work on the advisory board, Beth has had to jump into uncharted territory. Typically in the student teaching process, preservice teachers don't have the opportunity to learn about leadership and feel the tensions that are often involved in speaking on behalf of others. Cheryl demonstrates such clear leadership potential and Beth has worked to support and nurture that potential as a part of her role as teacher educator. (Researcher Journal, Dec. 1999)

In an interview with each teacher at the end of the first semester, four of the six teachers identified themselves as "teacher educators" responsible for implementing an appropriate educational plan for their intern. Stanulis (1995) in her study of teachers in Professional Development Schools identified three themes that relate to this concept of "teachers as teacher educators." As a part of their work, teachers focused on developing independent thinkers, worked with interns to connect theory with best practices, and helped interns connect subject matter to children. Teitel (1997) also identified that working in the PDS gave teachers an active role in providing feedback on shaping university courses and the overall preparation of interns in university education programs. This work, in conjunction with the work of Teitel and Stanulis, suggests a shift in a teacher's role from mentor of future teachers to teacher educator. In fact, by beginning this dialogue and sharing the responsibility of shaping a future member of our profession, I begin to know what becoming a teacher educator means to classroom teachers.

Changes for Children

As indicated in the snapshot description of a typical classroom presented at the beginning of this phase, the *heightened amount of time on task* for children becomes

obvious. The teachers have actually altered the ways they interact with the children in their classrooms. Teachers recognize and value the extra set of hands as indicated in the following comments:

> The classroom is organized into small group centers as frequently as possible. The children rotate through four language arts centers for a portion of their language arts program.... During times I have full group instruction, the intern can work one-on-one with students who need a little more academic assistance, finish a project, or offer a more challenging activity for the advanced student. Likewise, when she is teaching the class, it offers me the opportunity to work individually with students. (Betsy, Journal response, #23-25 & 35-28, Dec. 1998)

> With an additional adult in the classroom, students tend to be on-task more often than otherwise. There is always someone available to refocus a child's attention on the task at hand... With more adults, all students have had the opportunity to create, edit, and publish at least one story so far. This is the first time we have been able to accomplish this so early in the year. (Beth, Journal response, #47-55, Dec. 1998)

Betsy also clearly articulates that having an intern in her room has contributed to greater understanding of her students as well:

> It has been my benefit to have another set of professional eyes watching our students and determine adjustments as needed. My intern and I are able to conference with each other concerning observations of specific learners...I feel like I know my students better this year, because I have had more individual time with them, as well as a valued colleague to discuss important aspects of the learning of each student. (Betsy, Journal response, #27-28 & #38-40, Dec. 1998)

As indicated by these teachers, positive changes for children clearly exist.

Absence of the University and Pedagogical Content Knowledge?

Although I have made the case that the teachers of Mountainside were not particularly interested in changing the "way they do business," many invitations were extended by the teachers to the university faculty to teach in their classrooms.

> The professors should come into my classroom. I would love it if the science faculty would come in and take all of the interns and work with them on some science concept. They could then move from kindergarten to first grade and so on...That is what a PDS would be. But there is no meeting with the professors and us. I feel like it is still the university and us. But, we are separate. We do our thing and they do theirs. (Interview, Lydia, #28-35, 9-98)

These teachers were particularly interested in the math, science, and social studies faculty participating in instruction in a "real" classroom setting. To date, most of the data indicates that this suggestion was made as a way of bridging theory and practice for the interns. However, there is an example of one teacher wanting to have a subject matter faculty member help the teacher explore mathematics in her classroom.

> I'd like Ron to come in and help me redo my math. I don't like the way I do math at all and I really need to make some changes. But do you think he could really help me with that (making classroom changes). Do you think he can work with kids?
> (Researcher Journal, 12-98)

This teacher thinks about participating in inquiry as she considers working with a faculty member to investigate the organization of mathematics instruction in her classroom. At this point, one might also note that the inquiry questions that she is posing deal with questions of practice and upon deeper probing appear unrelated to pedagogical content knowledge.

> Lydia said, "But what would my question be? I need to have a really good question. Like how would I organize my room to do math differently. I am bored of my math." In response, I suggested looking at how to organize math so that you can teach conceptually. Lydia responded that this could be a possibility but I wasn't sure that she was really sold on the conceptual piece. In our further discussion, I got the feeling that she wasn't sure how the conceptual piece fit into what she does in the classroom.

Additionally, although the university has provided many field based resources, at this point the resources to support this kind of collaboration are not yet in place. I believe that

this lack of connection will continue to exist until forces are created- including support people, time, intellectual space, and readiness- that embrace the connection between theory and practice.

Bullough et al. (1997) indicate little change in teachers' views about teacher education and suggested that theory was unrelated to their own experiences and had only limited worth. They stressed the primacy of practical experience as indicated in the following comment:

> They have all these new ideas that they have read out of a book, but it is really not going to work. I can think of many student teachers who come and say, "Oh, we are going to start this and we are going to do that." But it is not reality; let's put them in reality and step on it. (Bullough et al., 1997, p. 158)

Bullough et al. (1997) also noted that even after teachers had worked in Professional Development Schools for five or six years, little evidence of change occurred in the teachers' views of teacher education or the interactive nature of theory and practice. A shared perspective of teachers and university faculty had not developed, suggesting that aspects of the PDS program that extend beyond preparation of teachers may have less appeal or relevance for teachers. Additionally, they found mentors' conceptions of Professional Development Schools as simplistic, as evidenced in statements like "Its goals are to better prepare teachers with the real world kinds of things rather than just the kinds of things that (teacher candidates) are exposed to in a college situation." In fact, most teachers described the PDS as a place to "train teachers." Thus, in the case of Mountainside Elementary, the vehicles for university and school district faculty to partner in enhancing simultaneous growth, as well as connecting theory to practice will most likely not be actualized unless vehicles are created for developing these connections. Possible vehicles that could be support renewal and the connection of theory and practice

include building strong relationships between partners, gaining insight into each other's thinking about teaching, and developing a common discourse for renewal. Until these vehicles are in place, this issue will continue to be a source of frustration for those involved.

Phase Three: Teachers as Researchers
What is this thing called inquiry?

Description of Teachers' Work:

During this third phase, *Teachers as Researchers*, which is still in progress teachers engage in some form of inquiry. Each teacher individually chose to participate as either a support person for their intern, a collaborative researcher with their intern, or identified a separate but parallel inquiry project. During this phase, the teachers also continue planning and implementing instruction with interns, provide feedback, complete observations, and attend workshops focused on developing the skills of teacher researchers. These teachers also continue to meet informally with the building PDA to discuss, chart, and highlight their intern's progress. A triad journal was also added to the work of teachers in Phase Three. These journals are a written weekly conversation between intern, teacher, and PDA. As a part of their preparation for inquiry, these teachers read the Hubbard and Powers (1993) text on teacher inquiry, attended a teacher research in-service which provided examples of teacher research, and brainstormed ideas for their teacher research, formed research questions, and developed a time-line for their work.

What is inquiry?

The teachers at Mountainside Elementary, who have not yet piloted inquiry work[5], initially struggle with the notion of teacher inquiry. What is inquiry they ask? Don't we already do this without it being so formal? Can we call inquiry something that we already do? I thought inquiry was different, a university thing. These and many other comments ring in my ears as I listen to the teachers wrestle with teacher research.

> One teacher somewhat timidly showed her concern by asking "Can it [the inquiry project] be a joint effort?" and this comment was followed by another teacher nodding as she said, "Yeah, we could work together." As these comments were made, lots of teachers nodded and smiled as if relieved about not approaching this task alone. Clearly, the mystery of what an inquiry project is may be contributing to the trepidation experienced by the teachers. (field note, 1-28-98).

Additionally, comments like the following suggested the mentor teachers were still not clear about the purpose or process of inquiry.

> I know my student teacher did this huge inquiry project. I am just not sure about if it was, I am not sure about if it was derogatory towards me. She missed the fact that we were trying to get him into special ed. We tried to get him ritalin. We spent hours. I read the [inquiry] report once and I didn't know how to take it. The bottom line is that he didn't do well in the classroom...umm... no kidding.... She spent an awful lot of time on it for something that might be obvious. I am not sure exactly. I don't know how to take it. That was a whole half of a year where maybe we could have done some mini research projects... (Lydia, informal interview, 4-9-98, 83-90)

This same teacher, in a discussion ten months later, makes the following comment.

> How can this be an inquiry project? This is our job as teachers. This is part of the Instructional Support Team process. How can you call this research? (Lydia, informal interview, 1-99)

So why are teachers engaging in inquiry if they really are not sure what it is and what it might do for them? And why aren't they asking more about what inquiry is? And how

---

[5] One teacher has participated in a collaborative inquiry project with a student teacher, another teacher has had a student teacher conduct an inquiry project, and a third teacher has watched, from an adjoining room, a student teacher complete a project.

does inquiry fit into their work? These are some of the questions I hope to answer as we continue this phase of the PDS work.

Reflections

What did I learn about mentor teachers in a Professional Development School? Each of the three phases has provided a deeper insight into the work life of teachers in this Professional Development School. In the first phase, *conceptualization*, that teachers are not committed to the renewal piece of the "vision" and I find teachers are not always comfortable using their voices. Additionally, these same teachers value and protect their comfortable "ways of doing business." Two lessons are learned from studying the teachers in the *conceptualization* phase. First, we must build comfort in and deep understanding of the notion of simultaneous renewal. Second, we must help teachers learn to use their voices in productive ways to navigate the structures of work within a PDS.

In the second phase, *teachers as teacher educators*, we see teachers' work changing in meaningful ways as they incorporate an intern into the classroom. Teachers indicate that they begin to grow professionally as they dialogue with their intern. In this phase, we also begin to see a movement from conceptualizing the teacher as a "mentor" to assuming the role as "teacher educator." As this role shift develops, we will have to dig deeply to understand what being a teacher educator means to a teacher in a PDS. Does it include aspects of both mentorship and teacher education? Do either of these roles neglect aspects of prospective teacher growth? Do we have too much role overlap

between school and university-based teacher educators? How does being a school-based teacher educator impact on a teacher's own professional growth?

In the final phase, *teacher as inquirer*, the story has just begun. However, the most pressing questions are not what the inquiry project will be, but rather how will inquiry be appraised by the teachers and will inquiry eventually become a part of what these women do as teachers and teacher educators?

With respect to inquiry, many questions remain and new ones arose. Why was I disappointed in the growth of this Professional Development School this year? What did I expect? How do teachers understand the notions of renewal and co-reform? Do these teachers believe anything even needs reformed? How do these teachers conceive of a "well-prepared" teacher? How do these teachers model these qualities for their interns? What is an ideal PDS? How does it differ from the status quo? How do teachers envision working with their colleagues so that they can grow professionally? How do teachers see their own development being helped by their participation in PDS work? What do teachers cite as examples of their own growth as individuals and as a community? What needs do teachers suggest deserve attention next year? According to my wise friend and after completing this analysis, these are still questions that deserve our attention. However, in committing these words to paper, I have now sorted out "what I have learned" from "what I still want to find out."

What I know is that *this* work with *these* teachers within *this* Professional Development School contributes to our understanding of the teachers' work in creating a PDS. In reflecting on the three E's- *enhancing the educational experiences for all children*, *ensuring high quality prospective teacher education*, and *engaging in furthering*

our own professional growth as teachers and teacher educators- we have made tremendous progress. We have evidence that we have indeed improved the experience of schooling for children. We also know that teachers have willingly committed to the role of *teacher as teacher educator* and have created a more relevant teacher education program for our prospective teachers. Indeed, within an 18 month period, these teachers have made laudable progress toward actualizing two of the three E's. These were the changes that from the beginning were consistent with their beliefs about the project.

What about the third E, *engaging in furthering our own professional growth as teachers and teacher educators* ? This had apparently not been a part of the teachers' goals from the beginning. As indicated early in this paper, at the beginning of their participation these teachers were so satisfied with their school that they saw little apparent reason for them to challenge themselves professionally. Rushcamp and Roehler (1992) noted in their study of PDS teachers that the nature, direction, and pace of change needed to evolve from the teachers. They found that as the teachers began to participate in lengthy discussions related to substantive issues about teaching and learning, the teachers set a course of action. By engaging in future discussions of theory and practice and forming relationships with their university partners, teachers in this Professional Development School may begin to challenge their own assumptions "that there is little need for change in their work."

Had I decided to study the creation of a Professional Development School that typically plays out in practice, this story may not seem incomplete. The goal of engaging teachers in furthering their own professional growth through renewal and inquiry sets this school apart from many others. It is the focus on developing an inquiry-oriented stance

to teaching practice that differentiates the potential work of these teachers from the work of others teaching in Professional Development Schools. Thus, this is still a missing piece to our not yet complete puzzle.

In charting out the work for the next year, these teachers in collaboration with the university must begin conversations about the connection of theory and practice in ways that will be meaningful to the growth of both teachers and interns. In hindsight, it now seems logical that these are conversations yet to be discussed. Connecting theory and practice will raise risky and complicated issues relating to whose theory and whose practice. What is the role of teacher pedagogical knowledge, learner knowledge, context knowledge, and curricular knowledge and how does teacher understandings integrate with university-based content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge? To investigate these questions, vehicles for communication must be in place and a heightened level of trust must exist.

References

Bentley, M. (1993, November). Constructivism and the new reform paradigm. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting for the National Council of the Social Studies, Nashville, TN.

Bruner, J. 1986). Actual minds possible worlds. Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press.

Bullough, R.V., Kauchak, D. Crow, N.A., Hobbs, S. & Stokes, D. (1997). Professional Development Schools: Catalysts for Teacher and School Change. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 13* (2), 153-169.

Dana, N.F., Dana, T.M., & Hernandez, D. (1997). Stages in the evolution of a school university collaborative/ The Mountainside elementary school experience. Pennsylvania Educational Leadership, 17(1), 30-37.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1998). Teacher learning that supports student learning. *Educational Leadership, 55(5), 6-11.*

Darling-Hammond, L. (1994). Professional development schools: Schools for a developing profession. New York: Teachers College Press.

Erickson, F. (1986). Qualitative methods in research on teaching. In M. Wittrock (Ed.), Handbook of research on teaching. (3rd ed., pp.3-36) New York: Macmillan.

Fleury, S.C. (1993, November.). Trivial constructivism and the politics of social knowledge. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting for the National Council of the Social Studies, Nashville, TN.

Frankes, Valli, & Cooper (1998).

Fullan, M. (1994). Teacher leadership: A failure to conceptualize. In D.R. Walling (ed.), *Teachers as Leaders: Perspectives on the professional development of teachers*. Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappan.

Fullan, M.G. (1991). *The new meaning of change*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Goetz, J., and LeCompte, M. (1984). *Ethnography and qualitative design in educational research*. San Diego: Academic Press.

Hargreaves, A (1994). *Changing Teachers, changing times*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Holmes Group (1986). Tomorrow's teachers. East Lansing, MI: Author.

Goodlad, J.I. (1994). *Educational Renewal: Better Teachers, Better Schools*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Levine, M. (1997). Educating Teachers for Restructured Schools. In F.B. Murray (ed.), *The Teacher Educator's Handbook: Building a Knowledge Base for the Preparation of Teachers*, pp. 620-647. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lortie, D.C. (1975). Schoolteacher: A sociological study. London: The University of Chicago Press.

Merriam, S. (1988). *Case study research in education: A qualitative approach*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Patton, M.Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

Powell, J.H. & McGowan, T.M. (1996). In Search of Autonomy: Teachers' Aspirations and Expectations from a School-University Collaborative. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 12* (3), 249-260.

Rushcamp, S. & Roehler, L.R. (1992). Characteristics Supporting Change in a Professional Development School. *Journal of Teacher Education, 43* (1), 19-27.

Schneider, H., Seidman, I., & Cannone, P. (1996). Ten Steps to Collaboration: The Story of a Professional Development School. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 12* (3), 260-187.

Stanulis, R.N. (1995). Classroom Teachers as Mentors: Possibilities for Participation in a Professional Development School. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 11* (4), 331-344.

Stanulis, R.N., & Jeffers, L. (1995). Action research as a way of learning about teaching in a mentor/student teacher relationship. Action in Teacher Education, 16(4), 14-24.

Teitel, L. (1997). Changing Teacher Education through Professional Development School Partnerships: A Five-year Follow-up. *Teachers College Record, 99* (2), 311-334.